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SPORTS, 1B

SUNDAY Record Searchlight

SUNDAY, JULY 29, 2018 ■ REDDING.COM

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Man remembers family killed in fire

Eddy Bledsoe lost his wife, two great-grandchildren

Amber Sandhu
Redding Record Searchlight
USA TODAY NETWORK

Eddy Bledsoe frantically searched for his wife and two great-grandchildren for days after the Carr Fire blazed through his neighborhood on the north end of Quartz Hill Road Thursday night and destroyed his home.

His family’s calls to law enforcement, evacuation centers and hospitals yielded no new information, so they took to Facebook, asking others to look out for a 70-year-old woman with two children. “I’d call (evacuation centers and authorities) until I’d fall over,” he said. But by Saturday afternoon, Eddy Bledsoe, 76, had his answer. He went to the coroner’s office to con-

firm that his wife of 27 years, Melody Bledsoe, 70, and his two great-grandchildren, James Roberts, 5, and his sister, Emily, 4, were all dead. “I’m just devastated,” he said. “All she lived for were them kids and me.” The night the flames overwhelmed their home, Eddy Bledsoe was with the three, and had briefly stepped out to go to the store nearby. “I didn’t think the fire could cross the river,” he said. “Within 15 minutes, it

burned my house down.” When he heard how close the fire was, he rushed home and was only a block away from getting to his wife and great-grandchildren when he found the roads were closed off and nobody could go through. He called the three and his great-grandson, James, told him that fire had come through the back door.

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Firefighters head to the Carr Fire Saturday in the Igo-Ono area. PHOTOS BY HUNG T. VU/SPECIAL TO THE RECORD SEARCHLIGHT

Carr Fire ‘burning in every direction at the same time’



The Carr Fire spread to the southwest of Redding on Saturday morning. These images were captured along Placer Road and the Igo-Ono fire station.

Mike Chapman, David Benda, Amber Sandhu, Jim Schultz, Silas Lyons and Jenny Espino
Redding Record Searchlight
USA TODAY NETWORK

The deadly Carr Fire kept western Shasta County residents on the run Saturday as it surged to nearly 83,000 acres with no end in sight. “It’s burning in every direction at the same time,” said Steve Crawford, a California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection operations chief. Already, the blaze is among the Top 20 most destructive California wildfires ever recorded. The Carr Fire is at No. 18 right behind last October’s 36,523-acre Redwood Valley inferno where 546 structures were lost and nine people died. As the fire forced new evacuations Saturday, President Trump approved

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Former firefighter and son pitch in

John Kaylor defended Sunset West homes

Matt Brannon
Redding Record Searchlight
USA TODAY NETWORK

You shouldn’t do what John Kaylor did. Staying behind in the Sunset West area after evacuations were issued Thursday night, Kaylor and his son, Shane, took refuge in their Ferrero Way home. Then the firestorm hit. Instead of fleeing, Kaylor called on his 40 years of fire experience, grabbed a hose and began defending his street from the encroaching Carr Fire — something he says no one without extensive fire experience should attempt. “From the time the fire hit until engines came in and helped, (we fought for) a good 45 minutes to an hour,” Kaylor said. Since retiring as Redding’s deputy fire chief in 2011, Kaylor sells fire equipment for Municipal Emergency Services. Conveniently, he had a proper hose and nozzle for spraying flames at his house. He looked at his 24-year-old son who attends Chico State and said:

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Former Deputy Fire Chief John Kaylor battles a blaze Thursday night near his home in the Sunset West neighborhood. CONTRIBUTED/JOHN KAYLOR

CARR FIRE ROAD CLOSURES AND EVACUATIONS

Evacuations in place as deadly Carr Fire scorches 83,000 acres

Hundreds of people have been evacuated due to the Carr Fire, which grew overnight to 80,906 acres Saturday. Most of the Redding hotels are fully booked, but in and around Redding, multiple shelters are open for people and pets so they can find shelter and stay safe during the fire.

Evacuated areas

According to the California Department of Forestry & Fire Protection, the

following areas have been evacuated:

- Community of French Gulch
- Highway 299 west of Trinity Mountain Road to the base of Buckhorn Summit
- Whiskey Creek Road to include the boat launch/day use areas
- South along Swasey Drive from Highway 299 to Placer Road
- West along Placer Road from Swasey

Drive to Prospect Drive

- North from Prospect Drive to encompass Middle Park Ranch Land Area
- West of Overhill Drive and north of Highway 299
- North of Highway 299 and west of Spinnaker Road to the end of Harlan Drive
- Keswick Dam east to Counter Lane, north to Quartz Hill Road

- North of Sacramento River to Keswick Dam Road, west of Market Street and Lake Blvd to Keswick Dam
- North at Lake Boulevard and Oasis Road to Pine Grove Ave and Walker Mine Road west of Cascade Road/I-5
- Pine Grove Avenue north on Lake Boulevard to Shasta Dam Incorporating Summit City, North Belt Line and Flannigan Road

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Good morning!

Thomas Conley



USA TODAY

Nancy Pelosi wants to be House speaker again. Can she overcome opposition in her own party? **3A**

Weather

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Hot. Forecast, **8A**

Volume 170 | No. 138
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Sunday \$2.00

